

SENATE—Thursday, June 17, 1999

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Dr. Washington Johnson II, Maranatha Seventh Day Adventist Church, Jackson, TN.

We are pleased to have you with us.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Dr. Washington Johnson II, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, who has worked through leaders in all ages to shape the events of history, we pray for the women and men in this Senate today. May they sense Your guiding providence and find wonder in the thought that You have chosen them through the voice of the American people to lead this mighty Nation. While they are here in this historic Chamber, remind them of their accountability to You for every choice which they shall make. May they live humbly and peacefully before You as they lead in making laws to govern our land. May they remember the limitations of human wisdom and power, and may they rely constantly on You, the omnipotent One, for strength and guidance. Dwell in the secret places of their hearts and grant them peace. Reveal Yourself to them; be the unseen Friend beside them in every changing circumstance. And may we all aspire for the day when *nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.*—Isaiah 2:4. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:20 a.m. Following morning business, the Senate will begin consideration of H.R. 1664, the steel, oil, and gas appropriations legislation, with amendments expected to be offered. Therefore, votes are anticipated throughout the day. Tomorrow, it is the intention of the leader to take up and complete action on the State Department authorization bill. Therefore, votes will take place during Friday's session of the Senate.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 11:20 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the Senator from New Hampshire, Mr. GREGG, is recognized to speak for up to 40 minutes.

NATIONAL FATHER'S RETURN DAY

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, Senator LIEBERMAN and I today introduce a resolution which asks that June 20, Father's Day, be further designated as "National Father's Return Day." The purpose of this resolution is to highlight the fact that fathers are needed in the family.

I heard Governor George Bush speak this past weekend in New Hampshire, and one of the things that really resonated with me was that he said the most important job we have is not being a Governor or being a Senator or being head of an assembly line or working at a restaurant; the most important job we have is to be good moms and pops. That is absolutely true. Unfortunately, in our country today, one out of every three children is currently in a household without a father. That has a devastating impact on the manner in which these children perceive life and the manner in which these children are raised.

We all know that in this time of difficult economic activity, where, unfortunately, it does take two parents working to raise a family in many households, there is great stress on the family to begin with and there is always the question of enough family time. There is always the question of having enough time to be with our children and have our children get from their parents the values and the ideas that are so critical.

Coupled with the fact that so many children are being raised in households where there is no father, it is absolutely critical that we refocus ourselves on the importance of the father in the household and that we say to those fathers who maybe have left the household and are not spending the type of time they should with their children, who are not coming back as

regularly as they should or not taking the extra initiatives, the extra time it takes to be with their children during periods when it is convenient for both the mother and the father: Think about this, think about what you are doing, and think about your obligations as a father.

So this initiative which we put forward today, this resolution to designate June 20 as National Father's Return Day, has as its purpose to highlight this fact and to say to fathers throughout our Nation, think about your opportunity as a father, not only fathers outside the home but fathers who are still in the nuclear family, think about your responsibilities and make sure you are living up to that obligation, because as a Nation I think we must all understand we are never going to be able to be a nation of values, a nation of moral strength, a nation of purpose, unless we give our children, the next generation, a sense of purpose, a sense of values, and a sense of moral strength. The father plays a major role in accomplishing that.

So this resolution, which I will not read in its entirety, although it is an excellent resolution, I must admit, has as its resolve clause:

Be it *Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes that the creation of a better United States requires the active involvement of fathers in the rearing and development of their children;

(2) urges each father in the United States to accept his full share of responsibility for the lives of his children, to be actively involved in rearing his children, and to encourage the emotional, academic, moral, and spiritual development of his children;

(3) urges the States to hold fathers who ignore their legal responsibilities accountable for their actions and to pursue more aggressive enforcement of child support obligations;

(4) encourages each father to devote time, energy, and resources to his children, recognizing that children need not only material support, but also, more importantly, a secure, affectionate, family environment.

(5) urges governments and institutions at every level to remove barriers to father involvement and enact public policies that encourage and support the efforts of fathers who do want to become more engaged in the lives of their children;

(6) to demonstrate the commitment of the Senate to those critically important goals, designates June 20, 1999, as "National Father's Return Day";

(7) calls on fathers around the country to use the day to reconnect and rededicate themselves to their children's lives, to spend National Father's Return Day with their children, and to express their love and support for them.

Then it requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe